(c) whether Government consulted concerned Trade Unions before opening up of this sector; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANARAO): (a) and (b) Considering the increasing demand for coal and lignite and since exploration and mining activities are subject to sectoral approvals/regulations, the Government has reviewed the policy on FDI. It has been decided to increase FDI caps to 100% and permit it under the automatic route for coal and lignite mining for captive consumption by power projects, iron and steel, cement production and other eligible activities permitted as per the provisions of the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973.

(c) and (d) FDI is permitted only in respect of captive mining of coal and lignite for specified end uses. Therefore, the trade Unions of public sector coal companies were not consulted.

Profit of Bihar Telecom Circle

†1034 SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the estimated profit of Bihar Telecom Circle under Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has fallen during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) whether it is a fact that the status of expansion of network of the telephone and mobile services under Bihar Telecom Circle is not satisfactory; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) No, Sir The profit of Bihar Telecom Circle of BSNL has not fallen during the last two years. As per the Audited Accounts of Bihar Circule, there is an increase in net profit during the last two years as under:—

(Rs. in crores)

Financial year	Profits	Increase in Profits
2004-05	34 56	46.10
2005-06	66.80	3224

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir, a considerable expansion in network of the basic telephone and mobile services has been made in Bihar Telecom Circle. The details is given as under:-

	As on 31.3.2005		As on 31.03.2006	
	Basic services	Mobile services	Basic services	Mobile services
No. of Exchanges	1155	—	1163	—
Increase in number of exchanges with respect to previous year	38		8	
Equipped capacity	1299698	235650	1330708	698120
Increase in capacity with respect to previous year	93926	97200	31010	462470
Number of working connections	950967	239835	1036353	571117
Increase in connections with respect to previous year	85165	84660	85396	331282

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

BPO sector in Orissa

1035. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to turn North-Eastern Region into India's next BPO hot spot;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government also propose to develop this sector in the backward, Orissa State, to improve its economy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) In order to expand the horizon of Software exports and to tap the manpower potential the private industry and NASSCOM are trying to expand into tier II cities. Many of the State Governments are also taking initiatives to promote IT in the major cities of their respective States, position them as the next destinations for the software industry and create more jobs.